

TO: All Vermont Health Care Providers and Health Care Facilities

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Conservation Measures
Contingency Operations
SUMMARY**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shortages have created challenges for health care providers worldwide. Vermont providers are also experiencing shortages of PPE.

On March 5, 2020, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided guidance on PPE conservation measures available to health care providers. Based on current reports from providers in the state, the Vermont Department of Health considers that health care facilities statewide are operating in the Contingency Operations realm of PPE conservation.

Based on the CDC 'Checklist for Healthcare Facilities: Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators during the COVID-19 Response' (see link below), the Vermont Department of Health recommends that all health care facilities and providers conserve PPE using all of those measures outlined in the Conventional Operations section of the 'Strategies for Scarce Resource Situations' guidance document:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/PersonalProtectiveEquipment.pdf>

To request PPE – The Health Department has developed a web-based COVID-19 specific resource request form. If you anticipate depletion of any COVID-19 specific resource stocks within the next 7 days, please use the following web link to submit a resource request: <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5504100/COVID-Resource-Request-Form>

Completion of this COVID-19 resource request form assumes facility implementation and practice of Contingency Operations Personal Protective Equipment Conservation (PPE) measures. PPE conservation measures are based in part on the CDC 'Checklist for Healthcare Facilities: Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators during the COVID-19 Response': <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/checklist-n95-strategy.html> (published 03/05/2020).

All resource requests are made with the understanding that such resources will be used by facility staff and patients only. Safe, effective and ethical release of state resources is contingent upon complete and candid answers to all resource request questions. All resource requests will be prioritized based upon resource availability and provider need with the understanding that not all requests may be met.

Implementing these PPE conservation measures by health care providers will help reduce rates of PPE consumption and ease scarcity. Some health care providers may still face PPE shortages, which may increase risk of infection for providers. The Health Department has some limited supplies of PPE available to providers on a case-by-case basis.

Release of any of the Health Department's PPE stocks will be made with the understanding that all of these Contingency Operations PPE Conservation Measures are already in practice.

PPE Conservation Guidance

Below are links to current FDA and CDC PPE conservation guidance documents:

FDA – N95 Respirators and Surgical Masks (Face Masks) – Emergency Use Authorization
<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/personal-protective-equipment-infection-control/n95-respirators-and-surgical-masks-face-masks>

CDC – Release of Stockpiled N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators Beyond the Manufacturer-Designated Shelf Life: Considerations for the COVID-19 Response
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/release-stockpiled-N95.html>

CDC – Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirators-strategy/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fhcp%2Frespirator-supply-strategies.html

CDC – Checklist for Healthcare Facilities: Strategies for Optimizing the Supply of N95 Respirators during the COVID-19 Response
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/checklist-n95-strategy.html>

CDC – NIOSH - Recommended Guidance for Extended Use and Limited Reuse of N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators in Healthcare Settings
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>

HAN Message Type Definitions

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Info Service Message: Provides general correspondence from VDH, which is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.